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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to obtain and analyze information pertinent to the Arizona Revised Statutes for community colleges dealing with precinct selection, District Governing Board member terms, and their qualifications, vacancies, and election procedures. The study design involved questionnaire surveys of practices in other states and of State Board members; interviews with district governing board members and community college administrators to determine their attitudes towards existing legislation; and a study of board election patterns for the previous five years. A study of governing board member characteristics revealed that 87% were male, 82% were white, 68% had bachelor's degrees or higher, 79% were between 40 and 69 years old, 56% had incomes between $26,000 and $50,000; and business executives comprised the largest occupational group. Most district board members favored retaining current legislative requirements, although two metropolitan district members favored larger boards. Support for current precinct residency requirements, election procedures and terms was virtually unanimous. State Board members favored increasing board size, holding elections concurrently with General Elections, and were evenly divided on increasing precinct numbers. The attitudes of chief executive officers generally paralleled those of the boards with which they worked. Fourteen recommendations follow. (TR)

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A STUDY OF
DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARDS

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Introduction

On September 17, 1977, the State Board of Directors for Community Colleges of Arizona authorized a study of "changes to district governing boards" and directed the Board Chairman, Mr. Drew Shumway, to appoint an ad hoc committee to secure someone to conduct the study under committee supervision. Mr. Shumway appointed a five member committee under the chairmanship of Dr. C. Theodore Kraft. The Committee included two members of district governing boards, Mr. Richard Mattice of Eastern Arizona and Mr. Victor Hopeman of Mohave, in addition to Dr. James T. O'Neil and Dr. Clifton L. Harkins of the State Board. In November, Dr. Kraft asked to be relieved of service on the committee and was replaced by Mr. Joe Atmar. Dr. Harkins became Committee Chairman. Dr. O'Neil was asked to continue on the Committee after his State Board term expired in January of 1978 and A. Paul Pearce was added as a State Board representative.

The first meeting of the Committee was held in Phoenix on October 11, 1977. At that meeting the Committee agreed to retain Dr. Richard C. Richardson, Jr., Professor of Higher Education at Arizona State University to undertake the study. The Committee also adopted the following statement of purpose:

> "to obtain and analyze information related to satisfaction with Article 4, Sections 15-676.01 and 15-677 of Chapter 15 of the Arizona Revised Statutes, the legislation on community colleges which deals with the selection of precincts, terms of members, qualifications, vacancies and election procedures for District Governing Boards. Information will also be collected on procedures that either have in the past or may in the future be helpful in promoting effective State Board and District Board cooperation."

The methodology adopted to carry out the purposes of the study included:

1. A review of literature related to the focus of the study.
2. A questionnaire survey of practices in other states with district governing boards. (Appendix A)
3. A study of election patterns for district governing board members during the past five years.
4. A study of the characteristics of district governing board members.
5. A survey of the opinions of district governing board members using a combination of structured discussion and interviews. (Appendix B)
6. A questionnaire survey of State Board members. (Appendix B)
7. Selected interviews and correspondence with the Association of District Governing Board members and with community college administrators.

The basic design of the study was approved by December, 1977. Data collection was completed by March 1, 1978. The following report contains an interpretive summary of the implications of the data along with Committee recommendations. The Committee wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance and support provided by the Coordinating Council of the Association of District Governing Boards and chief executive officers of the community college districts.

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OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARDS

A review of several sources (3,6,7,14) indicates there are twenty-five states other than Arizona where control of community colleges is shared between state and local boards. Nineteen of these twenty-five states responded to the survey. Table 1 provides information on these states. Since not all of the surveys provided complete information, data for the Table was also derived from the literature. (3,13,14) Not included in this analysis are those states where local boards have only advisory powers and those states which lack a system of community colleges.[1]

Of the twenty-five states having local boards with some governing responsibilities, twenty-two provided some level of local support ranging in 1973-74 from a low of 10 to a high of 52 percent (7,13). Among the seventeen providing local support and responding to the survey, nine have locally elected boards. Arizona and Oregon are the only two states having a locally elected board, providing local support and working with a governing/coordinating board at the state level. Governing/coordinating boards are distinguished by the number of areas in which they retain final authority over local boards. Coordinating boards tend to confine their activities to establishing criteria for new colleges, making budget recommendations and allocation of state funds.

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1 Colorado which operates a dual system of state and locally controlled institutions was not included.

TABLE 1

A Comparison of Public Two-year Colleges
Sharing Control Between State and Local Boards

	Method of Selection	Local Support Operating	Term of Office	Size of Board	Type of State Board
Arizona	Elected	Yes	5	5	G/C
Arkansas	Elected	No	6	9	C
California	Elected	Yes	4	5 or 7	C
Florida	Appointed	No	4	5 - 9	C
Illinois	Elected	Yes	3	7	C
Iowa	Elected	Yes	3	5 - 9	C
Maryland	Appointed	Yes	4	9	C
Michigan	Elected	Yes	6	7	C
Mississippi	Appointed	Yes	5	6	C
Missouri	Elected	Yes	6	6	C
New Jersey	Appointed	Yes	6	7	C
New Mexico	Elected	Yes	6	5	C
New York	Appointed	Yes	9	10	G/C
North Carolina	Appointed	Yes	8	13	C
Ohio	Appointed	Yes	9	9	C
Oklahoma	Appointed	Yes	Varies	5 or 7	C
Oregon	Elected	Yes	4	7	G/C
Pennsylvania	Appointed	Yes	6	9 - 15	C
Texas	Elected	Yes	6	7 - 9	C
Washington	Appointed	No	5	5	G/C

G/C = Governing/Coordinating
C = Coordinating

As Hall has pointed out, the position of Arizona is even more unique if the analysis is carried one step further. (5) Arizona is one of only five states in which there is a state-level governing/coordinating board responsible only for community colleges. None of the other four have a locally elected board or provide any local support. In comparing Arizona to Oregon it is important to keep in mind that the Oregon state-level board serves all levels of education.

The purpose of the preceding comparisons is to set the stage for the analysis of state practices which follows. While such comparisons are useful they must be interpreted cautiously in terms of their implications for Arizona.

Board Size

Board size has been reported in a number of studies. The range is from 5 to 25. (12:4) On the average, public community college boards tend to be small with more than 87 percent having fewer than 10 members. (10:5) Most boards have between 7 and 9 members. The average size is 7.62. (9:31)

The average size of local boards in states responding to the survey was 7.6 or exactly the same as found in the Mill's study. Elected boards with an average of 6.7 members were smaller than appointed boards with 8.5. While Mill's study indicates that approximately 60 percent of trustees are elected, a more recent study indicates this percentage to be 50, the same percentage found in this survey.

No state reports a board of fewer than five members. Among those states where local board members are elected,only New Mexico reports using a board as small as Arizona's. California and Iowa, which may have boards with as few as five members, both use variable numbers. In California, the larger districts generally have seven members; while in Iowa, the choice of numbers of board members between five and nine was left to local decision at the time districts were formed.

Terms of Office

A recent national study found the mean length of term for public two-year college board members to be five years. (3:9) The most common terms are three years and six years. (12:3)

The mean term for elected boards in the survey was five years; for appointed boards, it was six. Six-year terms were used by five elected and two appointed boards and were the most common term of office. Arizona is the only state with an elected board that uses a five-year term.

Method of Election

The literature is generally silent about residence, method of election, frequency of elections, the percentage elected at each election and the timing of board elections. Table 2 summarizes information from the survey for ten states with elected local boards having governing responsibilities.

Five of the ten states permit board members to reside anywhere within the college district. Four require residence within prescribed geographic sub-divisions of the college district. Oregon uses both practices among districts and in some instances within a single district. Seven of the

TABLE 2

A Comparison of Election Procedures For
Local Governing Boards of Public Two-year Colleges

	Must Reside	Elected	Frequency of Elections	Elected Each Election	Type of Election
Arizona	Precinct	Precinct	Each Year	One Fifth	College
Arkansas	District	At-Large	Every 2 Years	One Third	General
California	Precinct	At-Large	Every 2 Years	One Half	Local
Illinois	District	At-Large	Every 2 Years[3]	One Third	Local
Iowa	Precinct	Precinct	Every 2 Years	One Third	State
Michigan	District	At-Large	Every 2 Years	One Third	Local
Missouri	Precinct	At-Large	Every 2 Years	One Third	Local
New Mexico	District	At-Large	Every 2 Years	One Third	Local
Oregon	Precinct or District	Precinct or At-Large	Every 2 Years	One Third	State
Texas	District[2]	At-Large[2]	Every 2 Years	One Third	Local

1 District means anywhere within geographic area served by the college. Precinct means a defined geographic sub-division of the District.

2 Dallas Junior College District was recently authorized to change to a precinct arrangement.

3 Legislation passed in 1977 will change this to every 2 years in 1979. Board terms and size will also change.

states authorize all residents of the college district to vote for all board members. Only Iowa follows the same practice as Arizona with voting for board members limited to those who reside in the same precinct as the candidate. Oregon follows a variety of practices depending upon the district. It is interesting to note that Texas recently authorized special arrangements for Dallas so that district could follow essentially the same procedures as those currently in use in Arizona and Iowa.

By 1979 Arizona will be the only state following the practice of having an election every year. Illinois has recently changed its legislation to conform to the general practice of biennial elections. One reason for less frequent elections is given by the respondent from Oregon, "in very large districts separate election of board members at special elections could cost $55,000."

The most common practice among states is to have one third of the board elected at each election. Where the size of the board is not divisible by three, more trustees are elected at some elections but the one-third approximate ratio is maintained. California elects half of its board members at each election. Of course, the population elected is a direct function of the size of the board and the frequency of elections.

All of the states, with the exception of Arizona, time their elections so they are held concurrently with other elections. The most common practice is to have the election of college board members coincide with local school board elections. In 1979 Illinois will hold all of its non-partisan elections including college board members on a single state-wide date. Arkansas, Oregon and Iowa try to coordinate their elections with state and national elections but the more typical practice is to coordinate with school board elections on a date separate from state and national elections.

Experience with the Election of Board Members in Arizona

Table 3 summarizes the results of a survey of Arizona community college districts concerning their experiences with the election of board members during the past five years. Several points are evident from this data. Five of nine candidates ran unopposed in 1977. The previous high was three of eight in 1973. Elections held in non-general election years seem to attract fewer candidates. If you correct the Mohave figures for 1975 by dividing the number of candidates by the number of seats up for election (5), the number of candidates per vacancy is, on the average, one. A comparison of the three non-general election years with the two general election years in the study indicates that on the average there were 1.7 candidates for each vacancy in the non-general election year compared with 2.7 for each vacancy in general election years.

Two districts scheduled board elections concurrently with the general elections in 1976. The results were dramatic. In

Maricopa County the number of ballots cast were almost 24 times the previous District average. In Pima County, the corresponding figure was 13 times as great. The Pima County difference would have been more than 13 times as great except that the turnout at the prior election in 1974 was unusually heavy as it was scheduled in conjunction with a controversial bond election.

Two conclusions emerge from this part of the study. First, scheduling the election of board members concurrently with other elections increases voter participation significantly. This seems to be true whether the election is a general election or involves a local issue such as a bond referendum. Second, more condidates appear to be motivated to run for board seats in general election years.

TABLE 3

A Summary of the Number of Candidates Running For Election
And The Number of Ballots Cast by District for the Period 1973-78

	ELECTION YEAR									
	1973		1974		1975		1976		1977	
	No. of Candidates	No.of Votes	No. of Candidates	No.of Votes	No. of Candidates	No.of Votes	No.of Candidates	No.of Votes	No.of Candidates	No.of Votes
AZ Western	2	622	2	799	1	189	4	1,007	1	231
Central AZ	3	793	2	606	2	518	4	741	2	367
Cochise	1	226	4	163	2	428	1	129	1	90
Eastern AZ	2	276	2	495	1	67	1	24	2 [1]	93
Maricopa	4	4,078	2	2,350	3	1,521	4 [2]	68,337	1	3,518
Mohave [3]	--	--	--	--	7	693	2	354	2	321
Northland Pio.	1	200	1	10	--	Appt.	4	400	1	164
Pima	3 [1]	367	4 [4]	5,616	3	486	4 [2]	23,833	3	992
Yavapai	1	65	2	620	2	115	2	497	1	66

1. One of the candidates was a write-in.
2. Concurrently with General Election
3. District formed in 1974, first election held in 1975 under same law as secondary schools (members elected at large)
4. Concurrently with College Bond Election

Characteristics of Board Members

Tables 4, 5, and 6 present information about the characteristics of Arizona community college board members in comparison with the data provided in two recent national studies. (3,4) Most local board members in Arizona are men, a situation which also prevails at the national level. By national standards, Hispanic are well represented in Arizona, claiming 13 percent of the positions. Since 18.7 percent of the State's population is Hispanic, this group is still underrepresented but not so much as the Native Americans with 5.6 percent of the population in Arizona and a single seat and Blacks with 3.0 percent of the population and no seat.

Thirty-three percent of Arizona board members had not earned a baccalaureate degree compared with twenty-one percent at the national level. The percentage with earned doctorates (7%) was equivalent. On the average Arizona board members had somewhat less formal education than their counterparts although a substantially higher percentage had earned the associate degree.

The age distribution for Arizona's board members is very similar to the national study. The 50-59 age group is the mode as it was for the national distribution. The Arizona pattern shows somewhat higher numbers of board members both in under 30 and 60-69 categories. On the whole, however, Arizona board members appear representative in terms of age.

Three districts chose not to provide data on income. A majority of Arizona board members for whom information was available were in the $26,000 to $50,000 category. Fewer made either less or more than in the national data. Allowing for these modest differences,

the Arizona pattern was very similar to the national data.

In terms of occupations, the distribution for Arizona was within a percentage point or two of the national sample. Physicians and dentists were somewhat over represented while business executives and attorneys were less well represented than in the national study.

A review of the data described above does not permit an unqualified answer to the question of representativeness of Arizona community college board members. It seems clear that Arizona board members are older, better educated, have higher incomes, are less likely to be from a minority, are more likely to be from professional or managerial occupations and are much more likely to be men than is true for the population at large. At the same time Arizona board members are at least as representative as the national sample and appear more so in such areas as minority status, education, age, income and occupation.

TABLE 4

A Comparison of The Characteristics of Public Two-year College Board Members: Sex, Race and Education

	Arizona		U. S.	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sex				
Men	39	87	3056	85
Women	6	13	546	15
Race				
Black, non-Hispanic			202	6
Hispanic	6	13	70	2
White, non-Hispanic	37	82	3149	91
Other minority	2	4	34	1
Education[1]				
Less than High School	1	2	4	1
High School Diploma	8	18	62	13
A.A., A.S., A.A.S.	6	13	33	7
B.A., B.S.	16	36	194	40
M.A., M.S., M.A.T.	4	9	92	19
Ph.D., Ed.D.	3	7	24	5
M.D., J.D.	7	16	82	17

1. A different Study (4) is used for U.S. data.

TABLE 5

A Comparison of The Characteristics of Public Two-year College Board Members: Age and Income

	Arizona		U.S.	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Age:				
Under 30	3	7		
30 to 39	5	11	83	2
40 to 49	11	24	377	11
50 to 59	15	33	1047	31
60 to 69	10	22	1165	35
70 and over	1	2	516	16
			150	4
Income: [1]				
$25,000 or less	10	33	962	38
$26,000 to 50,000	16	53	1072	42
$51,000 to 100,000	4	13	409	16
Over $100,000			104	4

[1] Three colleges did not report on this item.

TABLE 6

A Comparison of the Characteristics of Public Two-year College Board Members: Occupation

	Arizona		U.S.	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Business:				
Executive For Manufacturing	8	3	769	22
Mining or Merchandising Firm Executive For Banking, Investment or Insurance Firm	3	7	315	9
Education:				
Administration, Higher Ed				
Faculty, Higher Ed	1	2	24	>1
Administrator or Faculty			43	1
Primary or Secondary School	2	4	203	6
Professional Services:				
Clergy			25	>1
Physician or Dentist	5	11	213	6
Attorney	2	4	261	7
Other Occupations:				
Executive, Non-Profit Org.	3	7	121	3
Elected Official, Local or State Government			114	3
Blue Collar Worker	2	4	117	3
Social Worker	2	4	26	>1
Accountant	2	4	57	2
Farmer/Rancher	4	9	282	8
Homemaker	2	4	243	7
Artist/Writer/Musician			3	>1
Retired	3	7	321	9
Journalist			34	1
Other	4	9	352	10

ATTITUDES TOWARD EXISTING LEGISLATION

The experience of those who have governed and administered Arizona community colleges under the provisions of A.R.S., Article 4, Sections 15-676.01 and 15-677 is an important factor in any evaluation of the need for change. To obtain information about the attitudes of district governing board members, members of the State Board and community college presidents, a survey form was developed. (Appendix B)

The procedures used in collecting data varied according to the groups involved. District governing boards were asked to discuss the survey questions and record the range of opinions in the minutes of the meeting. Eight of the nine districts were able to comply. In the ninth, comparable information was obtained through individual interviews with the board members. Data from the discussions was supplemented by the observations of the Consultant who attended several of the board meetings and by interviews with board members who had participated in the discussions.

The survey questions were mailed to State Board members. Twelve responses were obtained with one follow-up. Chief executive officers provided information in letter form or were interviewed by phone. Information was obtained from all districts.

Attitudes of District Governing Board Members

The following information summarizes the attitudes expressed by the boards of the nine districts.

Cochise County:

Board Size	Of No Concern
Number of Precincts	Should be increased for metropolitan districts (four members). Remain the same in rural areas
Term of Office	Retain five years
Elections	
(1) Precinct Residence	No Change
(2) Elections by Precinct	No Change
(3) Frequency	Annually
(4) Timing	Concurrently with School Board Elections or with General Elections would increase public interest.
Attracting More Candidates	Better coverage of board actions Board meetings at more convenient times
Improving State & District Boards Interaction	Continue attendance of State Board member at District Board meetings

Graham County:

Board Size	Retain five members
Number of Precincts	Retain five precincts
Term of Office	Retain five years
Elections	
(1) Precinct Residence	No change
(2) Election by Precinct	No change
(3) Frequency	Annually
(4) Timing	Do not schedule with General Election-would introduce politics
Improving State & District Boards Interaction	Attendance of State Board member at district board meetings. Recognition of State organization of Trustees.

Maricopa County:

Board Size	Increase board size (two members) Retain five members (two members)
Number of Precincts	Retain five precincts (two members) Increase number of precincts or number of representatives from each precinct (two members)
Term of Office	Retain five years (two members) Change to four years (two members)
Elections	
(1) Precinct Residence	No change
(2) Election by Precinct	No change
(3) Frequency	Every other year (two members) Annually (two members)
(4) Timing	Set aside special day for all education-related elections (two members) Hold with General Elections (two members)
Attracting More Candidates	Better public information, compensation for loss of income (one member), shouldn't necessarily encourage more to run (one member)
Improving State & District Boards Interaction	Continue having State Board member attend district board meetings, avoid actions at State Board level without input from district boards. Continue recognition of State organization of trustees.

Mohave County:

Board Size	Retain five members for small district. Metropolitan districts may need more.
Number of Precincts	Retain five in small district. Consider more for metropolitan districts.
Term of Office	Retain five years

Elections

(1) Precinct Residence	No change
(2) Election by Precinct	No change
(3) Frequency	Annually
(4) Timing	Concurrent with General Elections creates problems in counties with three supervisory districts, Hold 2nd Tuesday in October.
Attracting More Candidates	Improve public information
Improving State & District Board Interaction	Establish joint study committees on important items before State Board, joint conferences, avoid unilateral actions without consultation. Recommend study of law of composition of State Board. Only 9 of 17 voting members represent areas having a local college activity.

Navajo County:

Board Size	Retain five members for rural districts, would support up to nine for metropolitan areas
Number of Precincts	Districts with over 200,000 probably need more precincts. Retain five for rural districts.
Term of Office	Possibly change to four years

Elections

(1) Precinct Residence	No change
(2) Election by Precinct	No change
(3) Frequency	Annually or every other year
(4) Timing	Hold with General Elections-less expense and better turnout.
Attracting More Candidates	Not board concern
Improving State & District Boards Interaction	Improve communication. Ask for input if issue involves local board. Elect State Board members, if appointed, should have community college experience.

Pima County:

Board Size	Metropolitan districts should have larger boards. (two members) Retain five members. (three members)
Number of Precincts	Retain five precincts (four members) Elect at large (one member)
Term of Office	Retain five years (three members) Consider shortening to four (two members)
Elections	
(1) Precinct Residence	No change (four members) Change to at large (one member)
(2) Election by Precinct	No change (four members) Elect at large (one member)
(3) Frequency	Annually (three members) Every other year (two members)
(4) Timing	Do not have elections at same time as General Election.(three members Have elections same time as General Election.(two members)
Attracting More Candidates	Compensate for losses to those who attend meetings. (one member)
Improving State & District Boards Interaction	Recognizing Association of District Governing Boards. Having State Board members attend local board meetings. Consult with district boards before taking action.

Pinal County:

Board Size	Retain five members
Number of Precincts	Retain five precincts
Term of Office	Retain five years
Elections	
(1) Precinct Residence	No change
(2) Election by Precinct	No change
(3) Frequency	Annually
(4) Timing	Prefer cost analysis before deciding. Might consider holding with General Election if analysis supports. College elections with General Elections might cause problems as district pre-

	cincts are different from General Election precincts.
Attracting More Candidates	Not a problem for this Board. Good competition and well qualified candidates.
Improving State & District Boards Interaction	Hold State Board meetings at local campus locations. Have State Board members attend district board meetings. Practice of mailing agenda and minutes is helpful. Continue support for Association of Local Governing Boards. Provide for local input to decisions of State Board especially at standing committee level.

Yavapai County:

Board Size	Retain five members
Number of Precincts	Retain five precincts
Term of Office	Retain five years
Elections	
(1) Precinct Residence	No change
(2) Election by Precinct	No change
(3) Frequency	Annually
(4) Timing	Concurrent with General Elections in even numbered years.
Attracting More Candidates	Board members could talk with people as individuals to interest them in serving
Improving State & District Boards Interaction	Have State Board member attend, local board members serve on State Ad Hoc Committees. Avoid developing regulations without input from Local boards. Counties without districts could have State Board member attend meetings of adjacent district board.

Yuma County:

Board Size	Retain five members
Number of Precincts	Retain five precincts

Term of Office	Retain five years
Elections	
(1) Precinct Residence	No change
(2) Election by Precinct	No change
(3) Frequency	Annually
(4) Timing	October, date set by State
Attracting More Candidates	Continue effort to improve college's image. Assure prospective members of legal protection through insurance against nuisance suits.
Improving State & District Boards Interaction	Hold State Board meetings on college campuses. Promote State Alumni Award. Disseminate State Board materials to local boards for review and information prior to State Board meetings. Avoid decisions without adequate input from local boards. Be sure decisions are consistent for all districts. Consider having State Board elected rather than appointed.

Summary:

The district board members are the product of a system that has worked well for them. Majority opinion in all instances favors keeping the legislation as it is. There is divided opinion concerning board size with two board members in both of the metropolitan districts favoring a larger board. Recognition that the needs of metropolitan districts may differ from smaller districts was also evident in the responses of three of the smaller districts. Five of the nine districts included members who were willing to consider the possibility of larger boards and by inference more precincts in the larger districts.

Support for the current procedure whereby a board member resides in a precinct and is elected by the residents of that precinct was virtually unanimous. There was limited support for changing the

term of office to an even number of years with four years mentioned most frequently. All district boards expressed support for the five-year term and the continuity resulting from electing one member each year. Sentiment divided on the timing of elections with about half favoring college elections concurrent with the General Elections and the other half opposed. There was support for a uniform date established at the State level. There was also support for holding college elections concurrently with other elections viewed as non-political such as local school district elections.

A number of districts did not regard attracting qualified candidates for the board as a problem. Those that did supported better public information and personal contact as the most common remedy. Protecting board members against legal liability and compensating them for loss of income were also mentioned.

Suggestions for improving relationships with the State Board fell into a consistent pattern:

1. Have State Board members attend local board meetings.
2. Continue support for Association of District Governing Boards.
3. Have the State Board meet on college campuses.
4. Avoid discussions without local input. Use joint ad hoc committees to develop policy recommendations. Continue efforts to improve communication such as distribution of State Board minutes and agenda, and meetings between executive committees of the State Board and the Association.

The underlying tension that can be expected when an elective board must work with an appointive board was evident in comments concerning the method of selection of State Board members, the need for them to have some experience with community colleges and the desire to have representatives from counties without community colleges enter into some type of relationship with adjacent colleges. There was uniform resistance to expanding the role of the State Board member beyond attendance at local board meetings and participation in discussions.

Finally, there were a number of comments from several boards and from the Coordinating Council of the Association of District Governing Boards expressing concern about the mode of operation of standing committees and the Executive Committee of the State Board. The perception was that outsiders including local board members were discouraged from attending work sessions. Such sessions were seen as the focus of decision-making activity for the State Board and hence the root of most of the concern about policy decisions made without adequate input from local boards.

Attitudes of State Board Members

The responses of State Board members incorporated more variation than was characteristic of the local boards. These responses are summarized by category below. Written figures refer to numbers of Board members endorsing an alternative. Arabic numerals refer to options.

Board Size

Four members favored the current 5 member board. Seven felt the size should be increased. One did not express an opinion on this issue. Of those supporting an increase, all but one felt the size should vary depending either upon district population or upon the preferences of existing board members. Seven and 9 were the most frequently mentioned sizes for rural and metropolitan districts respectively.

Number of Precincts

Six preferred to retain the current 5 precincts. The remainder favored increasing the number with 6 for small, 8 for large and a variable maximum up to 9 representing the specific suggestions.

Term of Office

Five supported the current 5 year term. Four preferred a 6 year term and two favored 4 years.

Elections

All but two members preferred the current arrangement of requiring residence in the precinct from which elected. All but three felt that only the residents of the board members precinct should vote in the election. Of the eight members answering the question on frequency, six preferred moving to a system of elections held every other year. Nine board members felt local board members should be elected at the time of the General Elections with an additional member

indicating this should be the case in large counties only. One member who felt boards should be increased in size at the discretion of the local boards also recommended the additonal members be appointed.

Attracting More Candidates

Comments on this item were quite varied. Several board members felt the publicity surrounding a General Election would be helpful. Two suggested the use of a committee to encourage qualified candidates to run. The better use of advisory committees, compensating board members, appealing to alumni and personal appeals by board members, college personnel and students were all mentioned once as possibilities.

Improving State And District Boards Interaction

Four mentioned placing the Association of District Governing Boards on the agenda while five recommended giving the Association input on State Board decisions. Five also supported having State Board members attend local board meetings. Four thought State Board members should have a vote at local meetings; others, however, cautioned against this citing a possible conflict of interest. Three Board members recommended avoiding decisions without input from the local board. Other suggestions mentioned once included having an annual joint meeting, alerting the Association to potential problems, using State Board staff and input from the Council of Presidents, having public hearings on all matters affecting local boards, using joint ad hoc committees to develop policy

recommendations and examining the range of decisions made by the State Board to see if all of them must be made at that level. One Board member favored and one opposed State Board meetings on college campuses. One felt establishing a statement of philosophy had been helpful in improving relationships.

Summary

State Board members differed with local boards on a number of issues. A majority favored increasing the size of boards particularly for metropolitan districts. By a slight edge changing the term to either four or six years with elections being held,every other year was favored over the current arrangements. There was strong sentiment for holding elections concurrently with the General Elections to increase interest and participation. The Board divided evenly on the issue of increasing the number of precincts.

There were also areas of agreement with local boards. Retention of the system of having board members reside in a precinct and elected by the residents of that precinct received strong support. Every suggestion advanced by local board members with respect to improving State Board relationships with district boards was duplicated by at least one member of the State Board with support for the Association of Governing Boards and having State Board members attend local board meetings either with or without vote receiving the highest grades. The variation in suggestions combined with the fact that some of the more significant recommendations of the local boards were mentioned only by a single member of the State Board would appear to justify comments from members

of both State and local boards concerning the need to improve communication.

Attitudes of Chief Executives of Community Colleges

The responses of chief executives fell somewhere between those of local boards and those of State Board members. Their responses are summarized below using the same form of notation as for the State Board.

Board Size

Six of the chief executives favored retaining 5 member boards in the rural areas. One suggested increasing the size to 7 for all boards while the remainder suggested increasing size to 7-9 for all boards. Those who favored keeping 5 member boards in rural areas recognized the possibility that the metropolitan areas might need larger boards.

Number of Precincts

Comments on the number of precincts paralleled those on the size of boards with the exception of one recommendation that precincts be eliminated.

Term of Office

Five of the chief executives favored retention of the current five year term. Two suggested changing the term to 4 or 6 years with the remaining two opting for 6 year terms.

Elections

Seven were in favor of retaining the existing requirement for residence in the precinct from which elected. Four suggested election at large with two being in favor of

eliminating precincts entirely while the other two recommended retention of the requirement for precinct residency combined with election at large. On the issue of frequency, sentiment was almost evenly divided with five favoring annual elections and four supporting every other year elections. Most of the chief executives recommended holding elections concurrently with the General Elections.

Attracting More Candidates

Most of the comments in this area closely paralleled those of the local boards. There was one suggestion to require a minimum of two candidates to be on the ballot and to require a minimum vote before a candidate could be declared elected.

Other recommendations included compensating board members and assuring legal protection.

Improving State and District Boards Interaction

Having State Board members attend local board meetings, without voting privileges, was the most common recommendation. Holding State Board meetings on local college campuses, avoiding decisions in the absence of time for adequate input from local boards and their staff, and disseminating information from the State Board to local boards were all items mentioned by several chief executive officers. Other suggestions included having local representation or input to all ad hoc and standing committees of the Board, selecting State Board members from those who have served on local boards, inviting State Board members without college districts to attend adjacent local board meetings, supporting the Annual Conference and other activities of the Association of District Governing Boards and avoiding preoccupation with

Attorney General's rulings.

Summary

While the attitudes of chief executive officers generally paralleled those of the boards with which they worked, there were several areas in which chief executives expressed opinions somewhere between those of local boards and those of State Board members. Chief executives were somewhat more open to the possibility of larger boards, especially for the metropolitan districts, than was true of local boards. This greater flexibility was also true with respect to changes in the number of precincts and the term of office. In each of these instances, however, a majority of the chief executives still favored retention of existing arrangements at least for the smaller districts.

There was strong support for retention of the requirement for representation by precinct combined with some willingness to have elections held at-large. Holding elections concurrent with the General Elections drew majority support although this was combined with a five to four preference for retaining the annual elections.

Recommendations for improving interaction between State and District Boards closely resembled those of local board members and included as a dominant element having State Board members attend local board meetings without vote, avoiding decisions without adequate opportunity for local input and continuing such aids to information exchange as disseminating materials, holding meetings on local campuses and providing for input to policy formulating committees.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Any attempt to discuss the implications of this study needs to be introduced by appropriate recognition of its limitations. It was beyond the scope of this work to evaluate the attitudes of other important participants in community college education beyond those previously mentioned. There are, for example, no data on the attitudes of students or faculty members. No attempt was made to determine the preferences of the taxpaying population or of their elected representatives to the Legislature.

It is commonly understood that those charged with managing and controlling an enterprise are least likely to find fault with the mechanisms through which they reached their positions of responsibility. So it is with this study. Local board members are most satisfied with the present arrangements; community college chief executives are somewhat less well satisfied; while State Board members, who are selected through a different process, are the least well satisfied of those surveyed.

While it is not permissable to speculate about data not collected, two observations emerging from the study can be reported. In one board discussion where the Consultant was present, a student representative to the board expressed a preference for at-large election of board members as opposed to election by precincts. This position was contrary to the majority position of that board.

There is also the evidence of those conspicuous by their absence from the polls and from the lists of candidates. While it is true that lack of participation in board elections and the number of

candidates who run for election unopposed may be indicative of the general approval of the electorate and their confidence in current boards as suggested by several incumbent board members, it may be equally true that the timing of elections, the infrequency of votes in a given precinct and the general obscurity of the process may discourage participation. Only the legislative process can address this issue adequately. The conclusions reported below and the recommendations which accompany them are intended at least in part to serve as the basis for discussion by the State Board for Community Colleges and, if it is their will, ultimately by the Legislature of the State of Arizona.

Board Size

Community college boards in Arizona are small by national standards. At the same time significant arguments can be advanced in favor of keeping them that way, at least in the smaller districts. Distances are great, populations are relatively small and five members seem to provide a balance between representation, cost effectiveness and efficiency in working together. Small boards do have a tendency to cross the line between policy formulation and college administration, however, and there is evidence that has happened. There is no objective evidence which can be cited to prove that any given number of board members is preferable to any other number. The question must always be preferable in terms of what.

Recommendation 1 - Community college district boards should have a minimum of five members and a maximum of nine. Districts with populations in excess of 200,000 should have a minimum of seven and a maximum of nine.

Recommendation 2 - The decision to increase the size of a district board from five to seven or nine for a district with less than 200,000; or from seven to nine in a district with more than 200,000 should be accomplished either by majority vote of the State Board upon recommendation of the local board or by majority of those voting in a district election called for that purpose. A district election on board size would be required upon presentation of a petition to the State Board for such an election signed by not less than ten percent of the qualified electorate of the district. The district board should also have the option of placing the issue on the ballot with the approval of the State Board.

Recommendation 3 - The decision by a local district to increase board size should be irreversible.

Number of Precints

The use of precincts to ensure representative elective boards occurs in approximately half of the states. The decision to use precincts and the number of precincts established appear to be functions of geography and population distribution. There does not appear to be any specific justification for changing existing arrangements.

Recommendation 4 - The number of precincts should continue to be five for all districts.

Term of Office

Five years is an average term of office for community college board members. The more common terms of 4 to 6 years for elected boards are a function of the frequency of election and the size of the board. All states in this study other than Arizona have pro-

cedures for electing board members every other year. While four years is a more manageable term from the point of view of its demands on the individual board member, the use of four years leads to a situation where more than half of the board can turn over in a single election. The six year term provides greater continuity, a value expressed by local board members and chief executive officers.

Recommendation 5 - The term of office for district board members should be six years.

Elections

While the value of residence in a precinct for board members as a method of ensuring representation seems well established in Arizona as well as the U.S., no similar claim can be made for limiting the electors to those who reside in the same precinct. One consequence of current practice is to limit voters participation to once every five years. It is evident voters do not turn out in significant numbers under this arrangement. There is also the question of whether board members should feel a sense of responsibility primarily to their own precinct or to the college district as a whole. Only one other state, Iowa, follows Arizona's practice of restricting those who vote for board members to the precinct of the board members residence.

There are several arguments that seem to favor electing board members on alternate years, a practice which is now followed by all states except Arizona. The first of these is economic. It costs less to have half the number of elections. The second involves participation. The experiences of Maricopa and Pima counties make it clear that many more voters will participate

under this arrangement if the elections are timed with the General Election. It may also be true that more candidates will be motivated to run. Finally, there is the matter of equity. Those candidates elected in even numbered years must now compete during a General Election year. While it is true that running at large and being elected in a general election year increase the costs of participation and the possibility of politicization of the office, there is no evidence to suggest the board members of public school districts who are elected at large concurrent with general elections are any less competent or dedicated than their community college counterparts.

Recommendation 6 - The first five seats on a community college district board should be distributed among five precincts with candidates for each seat limited to residents of the precinct to which the seat is assigned.

Recommendation 7 - Additional seats after the first five should be filled at large from candidates who are residents of the college district.

Recommendation 8 - Those board members who fill precinct seats should be elected by residents of their precincts and those who serve at large should be elected at large.

Recommendation 9 - Elections should be held in General Election years on a date established by the State Board upon recommendation of the Local Board. The number of board members to be elected at each election for five-member boards should be 2, 2, 1; for 7 member boards-2, 2, 3; for 9 member boards-3, 3, 3.

Recommendation 10 - The boundary lines for community college district precincts should, wherever possible, coincide with the boundary lines for general election precincts.

Improving State and District Boards Interaction

It would appear that collectively State Board members have all of the same insights about how to maximize their effectiveness in dealing with local boards that are possessed by local boards and by their chief executive officers. It would appear also that the distribution of these insights may be quite uneven with some State Board members much better informed than others. Periodic joint conferences, orientation sessions for new State Board members and spelling out policies and procedures of the State Board with respect to interaction might all prove useful.

Recommendation 11 - State Board members who come from counties with community college districts should be encouraged strongly to attend as many of their local board meetings as possible.

Recommendation 12 - State Board members who come from counties without community college districts should establish a relationship with an adjacent district to receive an orientation to local objectives, procedures, and problems. The orientation should include but not be limited to attendance at several local board meetings.

Recommendation 13 - State Board procedures should clarify the decision-making role of standing committees, the Executive Committee and the executive session. Arrangements for ensuring local input to all policies should be provided before final action is taken.

Recommendation 14 - The State Board should give consideration to establishing joint committees with the Association of District Governing Boards similar to the one which conducted this study whenever issues with local implications are to be considered. Joint sessions between the Executive Committee of the State Board and the Coordinating Council of the Association should also be utilized.

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Appendix A

Survey of Practices in Other States

State Board of Directors for
Community Colleges of Arizona

Survey of Local Governing Board Legislation

The State Board of Directors for Community Colleges in Arizona has appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to study attitudes toward such factors as board size, term of office, timing of elections, and election by districts rather than at large. As a part of the study, we would like to obtain information about practices in other states with locally elected governing boards. A review of existing literature on community college boards has not provided current information on these questions. We will be happy to share the results with you.

Please answer the following questions.

Name _____

Telephone Number _____

Address _____

_____

_____

1. Method of Representation

a. Which of the following statements best describes the legislation in your state? (check one)

____Local governing board members may reside anywhere within the community college district they serve and are elected at-large.

____Local governing board members must reside in specified geographic sub-divisions within the community college district they serve and are elected at-large.

____Local governing board members must reside in specified geographic sub-divisions within the community college district they serve and are elected by vote of the residents, only, of the sub-division they represent.

___ Other (Please describe) _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

b. Check the statement which best describes any variations in the legislation which represent an effort to adjust practices on the basis of population differences.

____ The legislation is the same for all community college districts regardless of the district population.

____ The provisions are different for districts with larger populations. Population level(s) at which provisions change _____

_____

_____

Please describe briefly how the practices with respect to residence and voting procedures vary in larger districts.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

c. Are there any significant advantages or disadvantages to the practices of your state with respect to Method of Representation? (Please describe)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Term of Office and Timing of Election

a. What is the prescribed term of office in years for local governing board members in your state? _____.

b. How frequently are regular elections for local governing board members held? (Check one)

____Annually

____Every second year

____Other. Please specify _____.

c. What fraction of the total number of local governing board seats are normally filled at each regular election? (Check one)

____One half

____One third

____All

____Other, please specify _____.

d. Are local governing board elections (check one)

____held at a time which is different from other national, state or local elections?

____held at the same time as (check as many as are applicable) _____nation, _____state, or _____local elections?

____Other. Please specify_____

_____

e. If any of these practices vary for districts with larger populations, please give the population level(s) at which practices change and describe briefly the different provisions.

_____

_____

_____

_____

f. Are there any significant advantages or disadvantages of the practices of your state with respect to term of office and timing of election? (Please describe) _____

_____

_____

3. Number of Board Members

a. What is the prescribed number of elected members of a local governing board in your state? _____

b. Is there any variation in the number for larger districts and smaller districts?

_____Yes, _____No. If yes, please give the population levels and the number of elected members prescribed for each level.

_____

_____

_____

c. Has there been any dissatisfaction expressed with respect to the number of elected local governing board members?

_____Yes, _____No. If yes, what changes have been suggested and why?

_____

_____

_____

4. Interaction between state and local boards.

a. Is your state level board (check one)

____responsible for community colleges only?

____responsible for all higher education?

____responsible for all levels of education?

b. Is your state level board best characterized as (check one)

____a Governing Board?

____a Governing/Coordinating Board?

____a Coordinating Board?

c. Which if any of the following procedures are used to develop liaison between state and local boards?

____State board members serves as ex officio member with voting powers of the local governing board of the college district where he/she resides.

____State board member serves as ex officio member without voting powers of the local governing board of the college district where he/she resides.

____State board member attends meetings of the local governing board of the college district where he/she resides without formal status.

____State board members receive agendas and minutes of the local governing board of the college district where he/she resides but would attend meeting only upon special invitation.

____No formal procedures exist for encouraging liaison between state and local board members.

____Other, please specify.

_____

_____

_____

_____

d. Are there any significant advantages or disadvantages of the practices of your state with respect to liaison between state and local board members? (Please describe)

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your help.

George Hall, Executive Director

Richard C. Richardson, Jr., Consultant
to the Study Committee

Appendix B

Survey of Attitudes About
Legislation Governing The Election
of District Boards

AD HOC LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD COMMITTEE

Study of District Governing Boards

Discussion Questions

The development and growth of community colleges in Arizona have brought important new educational services to residents throughout the State. The District Governing Board through its dedication and commitment has been at the heart of this success story. The legislation which established the selection of precincts, terms of members, qualifications, vacancies and election procedures for District Board members (Article 4, Sections 15-676.01 and 15-677) was passed in 1961. Growth in population, the maturation of colleges and experience with the system of community colleges have produced a series of questions the answers to which may or may not suggest revisions to the legislation. Before considering whether or not to recommend changes in legislation to the District and State Boards, the Ad Hoc Committee needs information. Would you please study the following questions, discuss them with constituents and come prepared to express your point of view when your Board discussion of the questions is scheduled.

Thank you.

Joe Atmar

James T. O'Neill

Victor Hopeman

Richard Mattice

C. L. Harkins, Chairman

QUESTIONS

1. Number of Precincts. The law requires five precincts for all districts. As a result of the "one-man, one-vote" Supreme Court decision, these precincts must be realigned periodically to correct population imbalance.

   a. Should the number of precincts be the same for rural districts (under 200,000 population) as for the metropolitan districts, i.e., Pima and Maricopa (over 200,000 population)?

   b. Should the number of precincts be increased or decreased for either classification of district? If yes, by what number? And why?

   c. Other comments or suggestions.

2. Residence of Board Members. The law provides that Board members must reside in the precinct from which they are elected. Only voters who reside in the same precinct as the Board member may vote in the election.

   a. Should the precincts in a community college district be eliminated and board members elected at large?

   b. Should the precincts in a community college district be retained with board members being elected at large even though each represents and resides in a particular precinct?

c. Should the current system be retained with each Board member residing in a precinct and being elected only by the voters of the precinct he or she represents?

d. Other comments or suggestions.

3. Term of Office and Election. Currently Board members serve five year terms with one member elected from each precinct each year.

a. Should the current term and annual election be retained?

(1) If yes, when should the election be held in a General Election Year?

(2) If yes, when should the election be held in a non-General Election year?

b. Should each District have the authority to set its own election date?

c. Should the term of office be changed to an even number of years so that it would not be necessary to hold an election every year? If yes, what should the length of the term be?

d. Should the terms of Board members be changed so that under normal circumstances a specified number of vacancies occur and are filled at each General Election every two years?

e. What could be done to increase public interest in community college board elections?

f. What could be done to attract more interested persons to seek election to a District Board?

g. Other comments and suggestions.

4. Number of Board Members. The law provides for five members for each Board.

a. Should rural districts have the same size Boards as the metropolitan districts?

b. Should the number of Board members be increased for either classification of district? If yes, by what number?

c. If increased, should all be elected or should some be appointed?

(1) If some should be appointed, by what method or authority?

d. Other comments and suggestions.

5. State and District Board Interaction. Effective cooperation between the State Board and the District's boards is essential to a healthy community college system.

a. What actions or procedures of the State Board have been most effective in promoting cooperation?

b. What actions or procedures of the State Board have been least effective in promoting cooperation?

c. What advantages or disadvantages might result from having members of the State Board serve as ex officio members, without vote, of their home county District Governing Boards where college districts have been formed?

d. What advantages or disadvantages might result from having members of the State Board serve as ex officio members, with a vote, of their home country District Governing Boards?

e. Would the suggestions described in "c" and "d" above create any problems for a State Board member who represents a county without a college district?

f. Would the suggestions described in "c" and "d" above create any problems for a State Board member who represents a county with a college district?

g. Other comments or suggestions.

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LOS ANGELES

JUL 21 1978

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
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